

[00:00:00;21] [00:00:12;00] **Joie Chen:** Reporting the news is a serious business. Especially when it comes to allegations that can damage reputations, raise doubt about the people and products we trust.

[00:00:11;00] [00:00:20;23] **JC:** Sometimes, though, reporters don't get the whole story. Remington Arms believes that shooters should know the truth about the Model 700.

[00:00:19;19] [00:00:32;23] **JC:** And it's a story they won't see on cable TV. In a history that spans almost five full decades, the Remington Model 700 has always been at the top of its class.

[00:00:31;24] [00:00:34;15] **JC:** Reliable.

[00:00:34;08] [00:00:37;05] **Speaker 1:** Right down the middle.

[00:00:35;23] [00:00:41;21] **Jim Land:** Those rifles saved many, many Marines' lives.

[00:00:40;11] [00:00:43;06] **JC:** Refined.

[00:00:42;18] [00:00:52;11] **Ed Head:** The way that was all put together and the way it beds into the stock, it promotes tremendous accuracy. It's a tack driver of a rifle. It's extremely accurate.

[00:00:50;29] [00:00:53;25] **JC:** Respected.

[00:00:52;21] [00:00:58;19] **Raj Chowdhuri:** Absolutely critical. You've got to have it. It's like air.

[00:00:57;12] [00:01:07;22] **JC:** Those testimonials come from experienced shooters who volunteered to shoot straight and tell the truth about a legendary firearm.

[00:01:07;04] [00:01:22;02] **Ray Carney:** The Remington 700 is a marvelous rifle, marvelous rifle. There are millions of them out there and I've shot, I don't know how many thousands of rounds through a Remington 700.

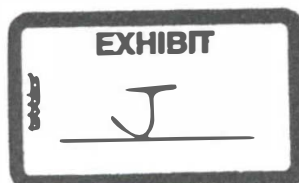
[00:01:20;21] [00:01:23;17] **RC:** Never had a problem.

[00:01:22;07] [00:01:34;17] **JC:** But the truth stands in sharp contrast to what you may have seen on TV. A CNBC report that only tells part of the story of the world's most popular bolt action rifle.

[00:01:33;10] [00:01:38;29] **Speaker 2:** Is there any credible argument that this mechanism is safe?

[00:01:37;20] [00:01:40;10] **Jack Belk:** No.

[00:01:38;29] [00:01:49;02] **JC:** In fact, a review of the program uncovered numerous



inaccuracies, misstatements, and mischaracterizations, all in support of a false conclusion-

[00:01:47;28] [00:01:58;25] **JC:** That a design flaw in the Model 700 makes it prone to accidental discharge. Since the first Model 700s were introduced, almost fifty years ago-

[00:01:57;22] [00:02:06;04] **JC:** More than five million have been sold to generations of satisfied shooters. Billions of rounds have been fired.

[00:02:05;12] [00:02:17;05] **JC:** Although a small portion of those millions of users have told the company a Model 700 rifle went off when they didn't intend for it to, both Remington and experts hired by plaintiffs' attorneys-

[00:02:15;28] [00:02:26;22] **JC:** Have tested accident guns which were alleged to have fired without a trigger pull. And neither has ever been able to duplicate such an event on guns which had been properly maintained-

[00:02:25;16] [00:02:36;00] **JC:** And which had not been altered after sale. No scientific test has ever supported the accidental discharge theory of plaintiffs' lawyers and their expert.

[00:02:35;13] [00:02:47;10] **JC:** That's true, even with a gun at the center of the CNBC report. The reporter tells the compelling story of the Barber family, who lost their son in a hunting accident a decade ago.

[00:02:46;09] [00:02:53;07] **JC:** But the show never reveals the condition of the gun, which experts found was heavily rusted-

[00:02:52;15] [00:03:02;07] **JC:** With a trigger engagement screw, safety lever, and fire control mechanism all adjusted, or removed and reinstalled.

[00:03:01;11] [00:03:10;00] **JC:** A statement made shortly after the incident concluded that a number of abnormal conditions existed in the Barbers' firearm.

[00:03:08;24] [00:03:20;01] **JC:** Even so, experts for both Remington and the family found the Barbers' gun worked properly when it was tested. The supposed flaw could not be repeated.

[00:03:18;27] [00:03:27;23] **JC:** The gun fired only when the safety was in the "fire" position and the trigger was pulled, exactly as it was designed to do.

[00:03:26;20] [00:03:37;24] **Jason Schauble:** At the end of the day, with the Barber incident, we weren't there when that happened. And we feel for that family. I mean, with the- I have the deepest sorrow for any family that suffers that kind of loss.

[00:03:36;27] [00:03:47;12] **JS:** At the same time, CNBC did not make a factual tie between what happened during those personal tragedies and a defect in our firearms.

[00:03:46;04] [00:03:57;14] **JC:** Another story involved the death of Cathy Anderson, which

CNBC began by inaccurately reporting the shot was fired when someone unloaded a gun in the next room.

[00:03:56;06] [00:04:02;04] **Robert Chaffin:** Bullet went through the wall, shot that lady in the head. She died in her sister's arms.

[00:04:00;29] [00:04:11;25] **JC:** But the police report clearly reveals that wasn't the case at all. An investigator's diagram shows Mrs. Anderson was in the same open space as the shooter-

[00:04:10;22] [00:04:24;03] **JC:** Just a few feet away, with no obstruction between them. The investigator's report shows the shooter wasn't unloading the gun, but had handed a loaded firearm to a fourteen-year-old visitor-

[00:04:22;28] [00:04:35;04] **JC:** Without checking the bolt closure first. As the teenager gave the gun back, the shot fired, killing Mrs. Anderson. Once again, when experts for Remington and the woman's family-

[00:04:33;25] [00:04:42;06] **JC:** Examined the gun, neither side could replicate the alleged problem. The gun fired only when the trigger was pulled.

[00:04:41;14] [00:04:46;02] **JC:** The CNBC report featured other incomplete evidence.

[00:04:44;20] [00:04:47;13] **Speaker 3:** No fire.

[00:04:46;01] [00:04:53;17] **JC:** Like this video, which purports to show law enforcement officers having trouble with their Model 700s.

[00:04:52;16] [00:05:05;18] **JC:** But veteran investigators who have seen the entire video say they doubt that. For one thing, the video doesn't reveal the condition of the gun or what happened to it after the camera stopped rolling.

[00:05:04;11] [00:05:17;00] **Charlie Conger:** I would want to see the condition of that trigger. Who's been in there? What's happened with it? Have the screws been tampered with? Have the adjustments and the sears been tampered with?

[00:05:15;19] [00:05:21;06] **CC:** Was the factory seal taken off the screw? So forth and so on. There's a lot to look at.

[00:05:19;25] [00:05:28;03] **JC:** But the guns with the alleged problems were not sent to Remington Arms for examination. And the video raised other questions.

[00:05:26;29] [00:05:35;16] **JC:** Who made the videos? And for what purpose? Were the rifles shown tested and inspected? And what were the results?

[00:05:34;08] [00:05:46;08] **JC:** The video came to Remington's attention through a lawsuit brought by a police officer in Hobbs, New Mexico who claims his Model 700 sniper rifle, seen

on CNBC-

[00:05:45;07] [00:05:59;07] **JC:** Discharged accidentally when he slapped the bolt open. But watch as an investigator tests the very rifle involved in the lawsuit against the officer's claim that the rifle went off on its own.

[00:05:58;07] [00:06:06;12] **Speaker 4:** I'm about to unload it the way it was advised that it was unloaded at the time of the discharge.

[00:06:13;27] [00:06:19;05] **S4:** As you can see, the rifle's functioning as designed.

[00:06:19;12] [00:06:28;27] **JC:** And then, there are the documents which CNBC says prove the U.S. Marine Corps has had trouble with a variation of the Model 700-

[00:06:27;28] [00:06:39;16] **JC:** The M40A3, which uses the same fire control system. Retired Marine Captain Jason Schauble, who received the Silver Star, the Bronze Star with a V Device-

[00:06:38;11] [00:06:48;14] **JC:** And a Purple Heart for his combat service in Iraq as part of an elite force reconnaissance unit employing sniper teams, and is now a Remington executive-

[00:06:47;08] [00:06:59;05] **JC:** Looked at the complete documents and found they tell a very different story. Marine Corps investigators concluded discharges had occurred after sniper trainees had adjusted their triggers-

[00:06:57;27] [00:07:09;29] **JC:** Outside of authorized limits. The Marines issued changes to the training manual to halt the adjustments, disassembly, or honing, stoning of any part of the trigger group.

[00:07:08;25] [00:07:20;22] **JC:** Since those incidents in 2003, the Marines have gone on to order hundreds of 700 actions, including the Walker fire controls from Remington.

[00:07:19;14] [00:07:28;17] **JS:** We're very confident that our customer has confidence in us, in both the safety and the quality and the craftsmanship, as the core of their sniping capability.

[00:07:27;14] [00:07:36;22] **JC:** In addition, Remington Arms contacted all of the government agencies profiled by CNBC to confirm there are no outstanding issues.

[00:07:35;22] [00:07:47;20] **JC:** The recurring theme, improper maintenance and adjustment, can compromise any firearm's performance. In any accidental discharge claim, the investigator must determine whether-

[00:07:46;13] [00:07:55;21] **JS:** The firearm was adjusted below the minimum parameters for trigger pull, or the sear adjustment screw was- was adjusted, which is not authorized.

[00:07:54;08] [00:08:03;10] **JS:** Or there was improper maintenance. Just like any complex machine, if you introduce a lot of debris and gunk and rust, and you don't take care of that-

[00:08:02:00] [00:08:08;18] JS: Over time, you're going to have issues with those materials and with how those materials interact.

[00:08:07:07] [00:08:21;05] JC: Remington's focus remains on information, not innuendo, unlike the insight of so-called corporate insider Roger James. CNBC doesn't tell viewers what James admits under oath.

[00:08:19;28] [00:08:22;16] Roger James: I do.

[00:08:21;02] [00:08:32;16] JC: That he never worked in Remington's firearms plant and only handled customer complaints about ammunition. What's more, James left the company seventeen years ago.

[00:08:31;08] [00:08:41;03] JC: Did he have any recollection of ever hearing anyone at Remington discuss alleged discharges involving bolt action rifles like the Model 700?

[00:08:40;01] [00:08:51;24] JC: No, sir. The other Remington insider featured in the CNBC report is the elderly designer of the Model 700.

[00:08:50;16] [00:09:00;21] JC: Although Mike Walker had declined an interview request, CNBC came calling, anyway, at his retirement home, and got its camera rolling.

[00:08:59;15] [00:09:08;06] JS: Mike Walker is a legend in the Remington community. He's one of our most distinguished inventors and engineers. He's a revered employee.

[00:09:07;05] [00:09:15;02] JS: We feel it's irresponsible that CNBC cornered the man and tried to get him to say things that were bad about Remington.

[00:09:13;23] [00:09:28;00] JC: The report points to documents Mr. Walker wrote in the 1940s, more than a decade before the Model 700 went on the market. But he can't say much about current manufacturing or quality control at the Remington factory.

[00:09:27;00] [00:09:38;26] JC: He retired in 1975. CNBC reported that since the introduction of the Model 700 in 1962, there have been over seventy-five lawsuits filed against Remington.

[00:09:37;18] [00:09:48;08] JC: Only a fraction of the lawsuits actually went to trial and of those that did, juries have found in Remington's favor in a vast majority of the cases.

[00:09:47;18] [00:10:01;11] JC: In part, that's because outside experts, even those working for trial lawyers, even they have never been able to reproduce the alleged flaw in a properly maintained and adjusted Model 700.

[00:10:00;18] [00:10:11;22] JC: The gunsmith relied on by CNBC is Jack Belk, who frequently testifies for plaintiffs' lawyers against firearms manufacturers about his so-called debris theory.

[00:10:10;15] [00:10:21;04] **JC:** Belk admits, under oath, that in his examination of Remington accident rifles, he has never found debris interfering with the safe operation of those rifles.

[00:10:19;27] [00:10:28;12] **Speaker 5:** My question, though, related to Remington Model 700s and 710s, whether you had ever examined any of those guns from the field-

[00:10:27;05] [00:10:33;21] **S5:** And found there to be debris or manufacturing scap [sic]- scarp causing a precipitous engagement?

[00:10:31;28] [00:10:34;24] **JB:** No, sir.

[00:10:32;28] [00:10:36;01] **S5:** Do you know of anyone who's ever found that?

[00:10:34;06] [00:10:36;26] **JB:** No, sir.

[00:10:35;15] [00:10:46;28] **JC:** CNBC features a 3D animation which diagrams Belk's hypothetical debris theory. But the show doesn't present the actual CT scans performed on accident guns-

[00:10:45;24] [00:10:59;03] **JC:** Which use science to prove no interference between the triggers and connectors of those guns. Belk has seen the CT scans, too, and his debris theory is prominently featured on CNBC.

[00:10:57;28] [00:11:05;08] **JC:** But his background, as a well-compensated expert for injury lawyers, didn't get much scrutiny.

[00:11:04;00] [00:11:13;15] **JC:** Testifying under oath in 2008, he admitted fifty percent of his income came from testifying against a number of firearms makers-

[00:11:12;15] [00:11:21;18] **JC:** Including Winchester, Thompson Center, and Beretta. And in his testimony, which Remington provided to CNBC-

[00:11:20;14] [00:11:26;20] **JC:** Belk reveals he's never tested his own accidental discharge debris theory.

[00:11:25;17] [00:11:29;20] **JB:** I could do that, if I was asked, but it's just a waste of money.

[00:11:28;09] [00:11:31;03] **S5:** Why?

[00:11:29;21] [00:11:44;03] **JB:** Well, first off, a precipitous engagement is a rare occurrence. I think we can all agree on that. The chances of duplicating one is- is so remote-

[00:11:45;23] [00:11:50;10] **JB:** I think all you're doing is just doing a lot of labor for nothing.

[00:11:49;10] [00:11:54;09] **JC:** But there is a scenario, which Belk acknowledges is possible.

[00:11:53;10] [00:12:07;17] S5: Is it foreseeable to you as a firearms expert, specifically with bolt action rifles, that if a person is closing the bolt with the safety off-

[00:12:07;00] [00:12:16;19] S5: And if they lower the bolt, they have their fingers in the vicinity of the trigger guard, that they could inadvertently contact the trigger?

[00:12:15;12] [00:12:18;05] JB: Could, yes.

[00:12:16;16] [00:12:19;27] S5: And that could cause the rifle to fire, could it not?

[00:12:18;13] [00:12:21;02] JB: Yes.

[00:12:19;16] [00:12:23;01] S5: Have you seen that happen, or heard of that happening?

[00:12:21;20] [00:12:24;13] JB: Yes.

[00:12:22;24] [00:12:25;12] S5: On more than one occasion?

[00:12:23;23] [00:12:26;12] JB: Yes.

[00:12:24;23] [00:12:35;06] JC: And Belk explains that a shooter who inadvertently discharges a firearm might forget, or not even know, he pulled the trigger. He offers this example.

[00:12:33;24] [00:12:37;25] S5: But he had no perception of pulling the trigger, I take it?

[00:12:36;10] [00:12:39;02] JB: He lied.

[00:12:39;03] [00:12:42;02] S5: This was a deputy?

[00:12:40;13] [00:12:43;10] JB: Yes.

[00:12:44;10] [00:12:48;01] S5: And why was he lying?

[00:12:46;19] [00:12:50;27] JB: Like- just to avoid embarrassment.

[00:12:49;22] [00:12:58;23] JC: Despite the emotion and exaggeration of some news reports, Remington believes the Model 700's history speaks for itself.

[00:12:57;16] [00:13:05;03] JS: We couldn't have been selling these guns for five decades with the educated audience that we have, the well-trained audience that we have-

[00:13:03;28] [00:13:11;15] JS: The skeptical audience that we have, without them not buying guns any more if they had a defect.

[00:13:10;08] [00:13:20;12] JC: And for shooters who have enjoyed decades of accurate performance with the Model 700, the truth about accidental discharges is clear.

[00:13:19;08] [00:13:32;15] RC: These things don't go off by themselves. Rifle is an inanimate object. Cannot think. Cannot do anything without being orchestrated by its user.

[00:13:31;20] [00:13:42;05] JC: The only accidental discharge involving the Remington Model 700 seems to have been the airing of the TV story, which didn't report all the facts.

[00:13:41;27] [00:13:53;08] JC: It's never easy to get a fair hearing in the court of public opinion, but Remington Arms believes it is important for the shooting community to hear both sides of the story.

[00:13:52;00] [00:14:02;11] JC: Remington is grateful for the opportunity to shoot straight with its customers at remington700.tv, and to tell the truth.